NEWS

392nd BG Memorial Association

VOLUME 10 FEBRUARY 1995

8AF CONTROL TOWER DEDICATION SET

EXTRA COPIES OF 392BGMA NEWS ARE AVAILABLE

The publisher of the NEWS has a minimum press run of 1000, and we usually ship only about 700, which means that we have plenty of extra copies.

Readers can have extra copies for the asking, but please send postage. The Post Office requires that copies outside of the regular quarterly mailing be sent first class, so if you want only one copy, send us your address and a first-class stamp. If you want up to five, send $1; and for ten send $2.00. (The latter amounts not in stamps, please.)

This applies to any current issue, and most past ones.

The address of the NEWS will be found on the cover page.

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IT ALL DEPENDS....

A former Crusader pilot was known throughout the Group for his prowess with the B-24 and also with the fair sex.

One day recently he was walking along a stream near his retirement home and he saw a frog.

And the frog said, "Kiss me, sir, and I will become a fair young maiden."

After some contemplation the former pilot replied, somewhat sadly, "At the present time I think I would rather have a talking frog."

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"It was a woman who led me down the road to drink. I never wrote to thank her."

-Ascribed to comedian W. C. Fields, and could have applied to many Crusaders in their WWII days.

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USAF MUSEUM AT DAYTON IS SITE OF MEMORIAL TO THE MIGHTY 8TH- CEREMONIES TO BE APR 22

The 8AF control tower at the Dayton AF Museum will be dedicated Apr. 22. Some 6 1/2 years in the making, it is the largest, most impressive museum yet put in place by the 8AF Memorial Museum Foundation.

The president of 8AFMMF, John Greenwood, had this to say about the project: "A replica of the control towers which we had on our bases in England holds a commanding position along the entrance to the USAF Museum at Wright-Patterson AF Base. This is a fitting memorial to our fallen comrades and the many accomplishments of The Mighty Eighth as well as an educational exhibit for the youth of today and tomorrow."

Arrangements have been made with the Dayton Airport Inn for the following things:

Hotel room, sgl or dbl	$50.00
Bus to USAF Museum	8.00
Breakfast Sat morning	8.51
Dinner Sat evening	18.37

If you are interested in attending this event a hotel reservation form, with instructions, can be found elsewhere in this issue.

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The Museum officials hope to display a photo of the control tower on each field occupied by the 8AF, and the 392nd's contribution is shown above. It was taken on March 5, 1945, and the officers in the photo are: Brig Gen Leon Johnson, commander 14th Combat Wing; Col Lorin Johnson, commander 392nd Bomb Grp; Lt Gen Junius W. Jones, Air Corps Inspector General; an unidentified officer; and Maj Gen William Kepner, Commander 2nd Air Division. The Washington-based Gen Jones was on an inspection tour of 8AF bases, one in each Division. The lucky 392nd, because it was generally thought of by 8AF officials as superior, was chosen to represent 2AD. For the sobriquet sometimes bestowed upon Gen Jones behind his back, apply to Col Gilbert.

SEND YOUR DUES TO GIL BAMBAUER, NOT "OLD" CHARLEY DYE

Crusaders are reminded that the new Treasurer is Gil Bambauer, 974 Fairway Dr., Dewey, AZ. The former Treasurer. Charley Dye, is now President of 8AF Historical Society. Send your dues to Gil in Dewey, not Charley in Albuquerque.

In a note to the membership, Gil writes: "I wish to express my appreciation to the Board of Directors for electing me Treasurer. And I wish to thank my many Crusader friends for their good thoughts.

"Filling Charley Dye's shoes will not be a small undertaking and he will be a hard act to follow. I hope to take advantage of his expertise.

"Martha and I send our best wishes for a Great and Happy New Year to all."

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NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY CAN BE ORDERED FROM PX

A new Directory, containing some 1300 names, addresses, and phone numbers of the Crusaders that we have been able to locate. has just come off the press. It is fairly well up to date because we make four mailings a year.

Also listed are the many Friends of the 392nd, and sadly the ever-growing Folded Wings section.

It will be shipped to you postpaid for $10. There is a PX blank elsewhere in this issue, with instructions to send your check to Gil Bambauer, Treasurer, 974 Fairway Drive, Dewey, AZ 85327.

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GIFT BOOK TO A WENDLING AREA SCHOOL IS AN INEXPENSIVE BUT EFFECTIVE MEMORIAL

Toni Robinson, 392 BGMA's liaison to the Wendling area schools, reports that books on American life are popular and useful to the school children of Litcham and Beeston, villages near the old Wendling base.

She said, "These students will one day be taking care of our Memorial and telling their children about the 392nd Wendling base and the visits from Crusaders who survived WWII. We believe that personalized books will further this bond of interest."

to one of the schools. The original photo will be returned to the sender.

It is not necessary for the memorialized persons to be deceased. In fact, now is the time for any interested Crusader to do this, because only you have the necessary information. Your family will have difficulty doing it after you are gone.

And if you merely want to donate a book without memorializing anyone, all that is necessary is to send in the form and sign it as donor.

These Litcham students, dressed in their Sunday best, are shown gathered around Ed Popek, 577th pilot, as he relates some of his war-time experiences while based at Wendling. This was on one of the Group's Returns, and the rapt attention of the students illustrates their interest in the history of the 392nd.

-Toni Robinson photo

The Memorial Association has made it easy for any Crusader to donate a book. All that is needed is a check for $50 and a photo of the crew or individual to be memorialized. It would also be helpful if some brief descriptive material would accompany it, such as the date the person or persons were at Wendling, or any other pertinent information. This and the properly filled out form, found elsewhere on this page, should be sent to Gil Bambauer. The photo will be copied for inclusion in a book that will be purchased and given

IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE MEMBERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM, THE ASSOCIATION WILL GIVE TO EACH $50 DONOR, AS LONG AS THE SUPPLY LASTS, A 20 X 20 PRINT, SUITABLE FOR FRAMING, OF THE B-24 P-BAR, THE FLYING CRUSADER, BY FREDERICK T. SEARLE.

A start has already been made on the program with a gift from the Oscar Weed crew and from the family of the late L. D. Robinson, aerial gunner.

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CORRECTION

In a recent edition we reported that 1/Lt John Donohue, navigator-bombardier on the Ellis and Walker crews in the 578th, worked for the New York Port Authority.

Not so. He worked for the Georgia Ports Authority in New York City.

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DUES NOTICE - - - DUES NOTICE
CHECK THE MAILING LABEL, SEE IF YOU'VE PAID

MEMORIAL GIFT TO WENDLING AREA SCHOOL LIBRARIES

I/we donate $50 to the 392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n, and I/we request that a book be purchased for the Litcham or Beeston school library, and that it be inscribed as follows:

IN MEMORY OF: (List a crew or an individual)

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

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_____

_____

_____

_____

A photograph of the crew or individual is enclosed, which is to be copied and and copy placed in the book. I understand that the original photo will be returned to me after copying.

Additional descriptive material, such as dates the above were at Wendling, is also enclosed.

Donor_____

Street, City_____

State, Zip_____

Telephone (in case we have any questions) Area code:_____

SEND THIS FORM WITH CHECK AND PHOTO TO GIL BAMBAUER, TREASURER, 974 FAIRWAY DRIVE, DEWEY, AZ 86327-5825

_____

PX ITEMS

Book, "392nd War Stories", by Col Myron Keilman, 579th, $20	$ _____
Book, "Country Boy Combat Pilot", by Col Bob Tays, 578th, $15	$ _____
Book, "The Liberators From Wendling", by Col Bob Vickers, 578th, $25	$ _____
Book, "Crew Dog", by Maj John Matt, 579th, $28.95 postpaid	$ _____
Cap, black, 392nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, summer, $9	$ _____
Cap, black, 392nd Bomb Group w/gold braid, winter, $9	$ _____
Cap, blue, 392nd Bomb Group w/B-24 and Crusader logo, $9	$ _____
Directory, $10 postpaid	$ _____
Jacket, white nylon, w/392BG and Crusader patches, $20 (Circle size wanted) M L XL XXL	$ _____
Patch, 392nd Bomb Group logo, $1.50 postpaid	$ _____
Print, "The Flying Crusader", by Frederick T. Searle, unsigned, reduced to $10	$ _____
Print, "The Flying Crusader", by Frederick T. Searle, signed, reduced to $15	$ _____
T-shirt, 392nd Bomb Group, $10 (Circle size wanted) M L XL XXL	$ _____
Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, "The Early Days"	$ _____
Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, "The Ground Support Teams Prepare For A Mission"	$ _____
Video, Symposium above, "The Tough Missions, Pt 1: Bremen, Keil, Gotha, Freidrichshafen	$ _____
Video, Symposium above, "The Tough Missions, Pt 2: Politz, Berlin, Bernberg, Bingen, Wesel	$ _____
Video, from Albuquerque Reunion Symposium, general scenes from the reunion	$ _____
(EACH VIDEO IS $23 POSTPAID)	
ADD $1.50 PER ITEM FOR SHIPPING COSTS (EXCEPT POSTPAID ITEMS)	$ _____
TOTAL	$ _____

Send with check to Gil Bambauer, Treas, 954 Fairway Dr., Dewey, AR 86327

1944 578TH SQDN HISTORY CAPTURES A MOMENT IN TIME

The following was written in July 1944 by Capt Don McCammond, 578th S-2. We had flown 125 of our 285 missions; Big Week, First Berlin, Friedrichshafen, and D-Day were behind us. Ahead was the break-out from the Normandy beachhead, crossing the Marne, the Battle of the Bulge, and VE day. The original copy has not been edited to bring it up to date.

Military units have personality, chimerical perhaps, but nontheless existing, a loosely woven reflection of the personality of their commanding officer. The 578th Bombardment Squadron (H) was not an exception, bearing the imprint of the man who commanded it for 17 months, its first commanding officer, Warren A. Polking of Carrell, Iowa.

Entering the Group as a Captain, with a long record of service as an instructor pilot, he left this month, a Lieutenant Colonel. Colonel Polking was the only remaining CO of the four named by Col Irvine A. Rendle, Group Commander, to head the original Squadron cadres. Others were transferred, replaced or lost in combat. Colonel Polking stayed on.

When he left, the Colonel had 25 missions to his credit, leading formations to Abbeville, Woensdrecht, Munster twice, Rjukan, Bremen, Kiel twice, Pas de Calais three times, Furth, Bordeau, Erkner, Mont-De-Marsan, Marquise, Gutersloh, Hamm, St. Laurent Sur-mer, Lemans, Orleans/Bricy A/F, Tours, Bernberg, Saarbrucken, Erfurt. He wore a Distinguished Flying Cross, an Air Medal with three Oak Leaf clusters, and the same old hat he'd had since the unit left the States. He didn't wear the mustache nurtured through many months of flying, a concession to custom; nearly all the flying personnel were attempting them. The prevalent superstition was not to shave it off until the 25th mission was completed.

Beginning with one aircraft and three crews and a T/O for nine of each, Colonel Polking had 22 crews and almost as many aircraft in the Squadron when he left.

Nine original crews crossed the Atlantic as the 578th Squadron. As Colonel Polking relinquished command, the entire line-up of crews had changed.

The completion of tour this month by Captain C. E. Edwards and his crew took the last familiar name off the operational roster. Henceforward the crews would be replacements.

Five of Colonel Polking's "old" crews finished a tour of operations. Capt Edwards' flight (Capts Lishka and Fletcher) came through. Lt McKee, B-Flight commander, went down on the raid to St. Jean D'Angely on Dec. 30, 1943. Lt Kirksmith had returned home after illness. His crew, with their old co-pilot Lt Rex Johnson in the pilot's seat, went down on the Friedrichshafen raid March 18, 1944. Lt Buschman, the squadron's first loss, failed to return from Vegesack on the Group's fourth mission on Oct. 8, 1943. Lt Steinmetz and his crew have been reported KIA on the Munster mission Nov. 5, 1943. Lt Buschman's crew were reported POW early this year. Nothing has been heard from the other two crews, with the exception of Sgt Malavasic on Lt MeKee's crew, reported POW.

The new commanding officer of the Squadron was Major George C. Player of Greenwood, SC. The mild mannered Southerner had been a member of the Squadron for several months, "learning the trade". As assistant commander, he had plenty of opportunity to observe and fit into the Squadron pattern.

Next to the Colonel's departure for the States, the greatest event was the completion of tour by Capt Edwards and his enlisted men. For 14 months they headed the operational roster as Crew 8-1. Called the model or prime crew, they had been the basis for the training program in the States, the kernel of operations in the ETO. For being the best they paid the penalty of flying only when the Squadron was leading the Group. This materially lengthened their tour of service. While they waited to lead, old and new crews finished their combat. A lot could be written for this crew's contribution to the Squadron, and a mess of sentimentalilty about their service to their country. Such a tribute would not be in keeping with the quiet, solid record they achieved as soldiers and men. They were the old 578th.

On the distaff side of the month's events, there were two marriages by 578th men to British girls. Sgt William L. Engels, ordnance clerk, and Cpl Earl F. Timm of Supply were the "I do-ers". S/Sgt Norman Goldman, duty clerk in the orderly room, stood up for Cpl Timm.

Almost unnoticed, anniversariesof the first year in the ETO slipped by. July 18, 1943, had been the day Capt Daniel P. Lieblich, executive officer, had formed the Squadron before the Alamogordo, NM rail depot to board the troop train for the POE. On July 25

These 578th and former 578th officers, obviously well lubricated, on the night of July 25, 1944 were attending a going-home party for Col Warren Polking, retiring CO. The are: (1) Capt Bill Metz, Grp Ord O; (2) Capt Ray Berthiaume, Sq Eng O; (3) Lt Walter Whelan, Asst Sq S-2; (4) Lt Harold Hartman, Atg Sq Adj; (5) Capt Walter Joachim, Sq Bomb; (6) Capt Hal Taylor, Asst Grp Opns O; (7) Capt Leroy MacTavish, Sq Comm O; (8) Capt Jim Goar, Grp Trans O; (9) Capt Bob Lane, Sq Ex O; (10) Lt Don McCammond, Sq S-2; (11) Capt Jim Myers, 577 Sq Opns O; (12) Lt Jack McCauly, Asst Sq S-2; (13) Lt Robert Wilson, Asst Sq Eng O; (14) Lt Joe Micksch, Sq Bombsight O; (15) Capt Cliff Edwards, Sq Opns O; (16) Maj George Player, new Sq CO; (17) Capt Claire Burtner, Grp Armt O; (18) Lt George O'Conner, Sq Ord O; (19) Lt Col Warren A. Polking, retiring Sq CO; and (20) Lt Joe Westbrook, Sq Gunnery O.

Camp Shanks was a hasty memory and many of the men were passing the Statue of Liberty for the first time. A week later the Squadron was in quarters at Wending.

Miscellany: Lt Bridson went down on July 11 with the 578th's former armament officer, Lt Sam Italia, as navigator. Unofficial reports later indicated the crew had been interned in Switzerland. Army nurse Marilyn Haglund, an old Alamogordo friend of the Squadron, dropped in for a visit after several flying trips home convoying wounded from Normandy. Lt McCammond addressed the children of King's Lynn on the Fourth of July. Capt Lane gave his job of Mess Officer of Enlisted Mens Mess Number One to Lt Mommer, and took over the job as Base Mess Supervisor. Lt Robert C. Wilson joined the Squadron as Assistant Engineering Officer replacing Lt Taylor, transferred. Lt Romska also relinquished his Mess Officers job and became Unit Equipment Officer. Lt Schildknecht was made base Air/Sea Rescue Officer. Lt Harris added the job of Squadron Gas Officer to his duties. Lts Shelley, Singleton, White, Kehl, Amble, McCarter, Green, and Slafka were promoted to 1/Lt. Lt Sabourin, his tour completed, transferred to the 577th as Squadron Training Officer.

During July, the Squadron flew 126 sorties on 16 missions. Colonel Polking led three missions; Major Player three. The Squadron led the Group four times, the Combat Wing once, and the Divison once. Two crews are missing in action and two men were wounded in action.

Six new crews, Rudd, Miller, Ellis, Twining, Eggleston, and Sturm, were assigned to the Squadron. In addition to Capt Edwards, three other crews finished their tours: Capt Young of the famous GI Jane and Lts Stroble and Sabourin.

Squadron personnel received a total of 28 DFC's, 78 Air Medals, 59 Oak Leaf Clusters to the Air Medal and four Purple Hearts.

The above was laboriously typed from a tape secured from Maxwell Field by Ernie Barber, the Group archivist. Tapes for the other Squadrons of the Group are available. Ask Ernie how to get them.

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BARNEY GLETTLER EMBARKS ON THIRD CAREER

Barnard U. Glettler was Flying Control Officer at Wendling. He had a successful career in the communications field in the Air Force, retiring as Colonel.

He then joined AT&T, bringing with him military and communications expertise, and spent many years with that company, some of them in Iran just before the revolution. He retired from AT&T in 1983.

Now he has been elected to the Board of Leelanau County Commissioners, and is starting a new career as a public servant.

Barney's home is in New Jersey, but he has maintained a residence near Traverse City for some time and when the call came for better local government, he responded.

He is a member of the Board of Directors of the 392BGMA.

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FROM THE KEILMAN WWII NOTEBOOK

Col Myron Keilman, the commander of the 579th, has compiled accounts of events in 392nd history that he has named "Lest We Forget ". Following are his remarks on the Gotha mission:

The "Big Week", 19 through 25 February, 1944, was the most concerted period of operations against Nazi Germany thus far by the Mighty Eighth Air Force. No less than 3,800 deep penetration bomber strikes (sorties) were mounted against 26 aircraft factories, causing severe reduction of their production capacity. The 392nd scored one of the most accurate and spectacular strikes of the war. 98% of its bombs struck the twin-engine fighter plant at Gotha. It earned the 392nd the Distinguished Unit Citation. Seven aircraft and crews were lost.

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PROFILE

S/Sgt Worth Thomas was the nose gunner on the Ed Nehring crew in the 577th. He began his tour in July 1944 and flew 35 missions.

He spent 38 years in the furniture manufacturing business and is now retired.

He reported that he visited Wendling in 1987 and again in 1994.

He is the father of two boys and three grandchildren, and lives at RR 6, Box 220, Thomasville, NC 37360.

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CELEBRATE 50th V-E DAY

Second Air Division Association
48th Annual Convention, July 3-6, 1995

MARRIOTT GRIFFIN GATE RESORT, 1800 NEWTOWN PIKE, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40511
(606) 231-5100

• *Schedule of Events* •

SUNDAY, JULY 2
Registration & Early Bird Party

MONDAY, JULY 3
Registration
Golf Tournament
Cocktail Party & Buffet Dinner
Awards Ceremony

TUESDAY, JULY 4
Buffet Breakfast
Special Tours
Cocktail Party
Group Dinners

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5
Buffet Breakfast
Business Meeting
Cocktail Party
Dinner & Dance

THURSDAY, JULY 6
Buffet Breakfast & Departure

THE COSTS LISTED BELOW ARE FOR THE ENTIRE PACKAGE (7/3–7/6) LISTED ABOVE, INCLUDING HOTEL ROOM FOR THREE NIGHTS (7/3, 7/4, 7/5). FOR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS, WRITE TO EVELYN COHEN FOR INFORMATION.

• *Costs Per Person* •

Single Occupancy.....$450.00
Double Occupancy.....$335.00 each
Triple Occupancy.....$295.00 each

Deposit with Reservations — $50.00 Per Person — Full Payment by May 1st, 1995.

Cancellation Policy: 60 days prior to convention — $15.00 charge per person
30 days prior to convention — $25.00 charge per person
All cancellations 30 days prior to convention will be subject to the $25.00 charge — full refund (less $25.00) at the discretion of the convention committee (if funds are available).

• *Important Notes* •

Extra Nights: $70.00 per room + 11.3% tax. This charge and all charges for incidentals must be paid directly to the hotel upon checkout.

Non-Smoking Rooms: 200. **Handicapped Rooms:** 8.

Parking: Free on Grounds. **Campgrounds:** Use the registration form

Room Availability: We have 400 rooms at the Marriott and 50+ available at the Holiday Inn just down the road with shuttle service available.

Reservation Cut Off Date: For guaranteed rooms all reservations must be in by May 1st. After that date, only if rooms are available.

Groups: Your Group VP would appreciate hearing from you if you plan to attend.

Tours: See opposite page for complete information on the Lexington area tours which are offered **at additional cost** on July 4.
Airport Limo Service: Complimentary from the Marriott - pick up the special airport phone.
Golf Tournament: See opposite page for information.

PLEASE USE THE CONVENTION RESERVATION FORM FOUND ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE AND MAIL TO EVEYLN COHEN WITH YOUR DEPOSIT.

AT LEXINGTON WITH 2AD

• *Attention Golfers* •

The 14th Annual 2ADA Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, July 3, 1995, at the Marriott Griffin Gate Resort and Golf Club, Lexington, Kentucky.

The charge this year will be $65, as it was at the Hilton Head Resort in 1993, and will include greens fee, half a golf cart, souvenir golf balls, and a few prizes. Lunch will be on your own at the 19th Hole Restaurant adjacent to the clubhouse.

Prizes will be awarded in the Men's Handicap Division, Men's Peoria Division, and Women's Peoria Division, plus longest drive and closest to the pin.

Anyone interested in playing, send $65 to the undersigned (refundable if unable to play) and ADVISE YOUR HANDICAP or average score and bomb group affiliation.

H.C. "Pete" Henry, 164B Portland Lane, Jamesburg, NJ 08831
Tel. (609) 655-0982

• *Fourth of July Tour Offerings* •

The following tours of the Lexington area are offered on Tuesday, July 4, 1995, during the 2nd Air Division Association 48th Annual Convention, at additional cost as listed below. **Send the reservation form below and your check for tours DIRECT to: Lexington Connection, 605 Edgewater Drive, Lexington, KY 40502** (phone 606-269-4040). DO NOT SEND RESERVATIONS OR CHECKS FOR TOURS TO EVELYN COHEN. You will receive a full refund if trips are cancelled by Lexington Connection.

SHAKERTOWN TRIP — 10 AM – 3 PM — $39.50 per person, minimum 40 persons.
Depart Marriott in Deluxe Coaches, with guide, driving through countryside past horse farms, arriving at the beautifully restored Shaker Village for a tour which will include craft demonstrations, musical presentation, museum and gift shop. Lunch at Trustees House with Shaker dishes. At the village there are over 25 original buildings built in the 1800s. *Trip will be cancelled if we do not have at least 40 reservations.*

KENTUCKY HORSE PARK — 10 AM – 2 PM — $37.50 per person, minimum 40 persons.
Depart Marriott in Deluxe Coaches and discover the splendor of the Bluegrass and the magic of the horse. See the film presentation "Thou Shalt Fly Without Wings." Trace the history of the horse from prehistoric to modern times. Browse in the gift shop, walk through the international museum of the horse, watch a farrier demonstrate shoeing and watch a harness maker with his skills with saddlery. Light lunch. *Trip will be cancelled if we do not have at least 40 reservations.*

WAVELAND & ASHLAND — 10 AM – 2:30 PM — $30.00 per person, minimum 40 persons.
Waveland is a historic home built in 1847 by Joseph Bryan, a grandnephew of Daniel Boone. This is an outstanding example of a Greek Revival House, furnished with period pieces. Light lunch on grounds. Ashland is the brick Italianate home of Henry Clay with 20 room mansion, family furnishings, etc. *Trip will be cancelled if we do not have at least 40 reservations.*

TOUR RESERVATION FORM • 2nd Air Division Association • Tuesday, July 4, 1995

Name: _____ Phone _____

☐ Trip to Shakertown No. Persons _____ Check Enclosed TOTAL _____

☐ Trip to Kentucky Horse Park No. Persons _____ Check Enclosed TOTAL _____

☐ Trip to Waveland & Ashland No. Persons _____ Check Enclosed TOTAL _____

Mail this form with your check payable to:

LEXINGTON CONNECTION
605 Edgewater Drive
Lexington, KY 40502

HAROLD FINCH, GRP S-4, ALIVE AND WELL IN CARMICHAEL, CALIF

By Jim Goar

Most of us who served with the 392nd in WWII were very young, mostly in our late teens or early twenties. Even the majors and lieutenant colonels who led us were usually only in their middle or late twenties.

But there were a few among us who were a little older. One such was Capt (later Major) Harold Finch, the Group S-4. Now 94, he is enjoying retirement and in a recent note said "I moved to an old folks' home where I don't have to cook any more".

He strove mightily at Alamogordo, getting us equipped with the thousands of items we would need, from extra socks to flashlights.

I know, because I was his assistant and from the perspective of 50-odd years I sometimes wonder that as a green second lieutenant I was more hindrance than help.

Maj Finch and Col Kenneth Paddock, Group Navigator, sometimes converse, Paddock in Maine and Finch in California. Paddock recalls that Finch had served in the Army Air Corps since the early 20's, and had been commissioned from M/Sgt about the time the war broke out.

Col Jack Fritsche, Group Adjutant, was an army brat at March Field in the early 30's and remembers delivering S/Sgt Finch's newspaper.

Finch was troubled with stomach ulcers at Wendling and was invalided home.

Maj Finch's address is 5757 Cypress Ave #172, Carmichael, CA 95608-1375.

* * * *

Harold Finch
Shown above at his desk at Alamogordo, Capt Finch is probably negotiating with some Base supply officer for something needed by the 392nd.

AIR ANNIVERSARY
USAF adopted slate-blue uniform-1949.

PROFILE

S/Sgt Maltby F. Watkins, known as "Foxie" at Wendling, was a gunner on the Novik crew in the 576th. He joined the 392nd at Wendling in August 1944.

A native of Florida, Maltby had to take his medical degree at the University of Louisville because Florida at that time did not have a medical school.

He graduated in 1951 and practiced at Fort Pierce, FL until he retired in 1987.

He and spouse Gene live at 2709 S. Indian River Drive, Fort Pierce, FL 34950. They have three children and three grandchildren.

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AIR ANNIVERSARY
3 two-pound sandbags dropped in first simulated bomb drop experiment-1910.

PROFILE

Capt (later Lt Col) Floyd E. "Bud" Slipp was co-pilot of the Gonseth crew in the 577th. For the last 16 missions of his tour, he was pilot. He was original cadre, joining the 392nd at Biggs Field in April 1943.

He remained in the Service, and his Form 5 relates a history of the post-war heavy bombardment portion of the Air Force, showing that he piloted the B-29, B-32, B-50, and B-47.

He had tours of duty in Okinawa and Germany, as well as state-side duty at various bases. He was IG at Norton AFB, and attended Command and Staff school. He retired from the Air Force in 1965.

In civilian life he was in sales of industrial and heavy equipment, living in Las Vegas. He retired from that in 1983 and now lives with wife Ruth at 6209 E. McKellips Rd, #227, Mesa AZ 85205. They have two children and 8 grandchildren.

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AIR ANNIVERSARY
Last operational P-51 fighter retired to AF Museum-1967.

AIR ANNIVERSARY
8AF observed its third birthday with 1,000 plane raid on Germany-1945.

48th Annual Convention Reservation Form

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Group for Group Dinner Seating _____ Group for Banquet Seating: _____

Sgl._____ Dbl. _____ Trip._____ Will Share _____ Arrive _____ Depart _____ 1st Convention?_____

Deposit _____ Paid In Full _____ Nicknames: _____

If triple reservation, list additional name here: _____

TOURS: Use the form on page 38 and mail it direct to Lexington Connection, *not to Evelyn Cohen.*

DO NOT CALL HOTEL FOR RESERVATIONS, CHANGES, CANCELLATIONS, ETC. ALL OF THESE SHOULD BE SENT TO:

Evelyn Cohen
06-410 Delaire Landing Road
Philadelphia, PA 19114
Tel. (215) 632-3992

CAMPGROUNDS: Send this form **direct** to: Kentucky Horse Park, 4089 Ironworks Road, Lexington, KY 40511, Att: Dean Oaken. No deposit required. Reservations must be received at the campground by June 1, 1995. Please be sure to include your age if you wish to receive the Senior Discount!

Name: _____ Age: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone _____

Type of RV: _____ License No. _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____ Total No. in Party: _____

No. of Adults: _____ No. of Children: _____ Pets? _____

Member Second Air Division Association

Roberta Bull

PROFILE

1/Lt (later Maj) Milton M. Planche was navigator on the John Reade crew in the 578th. He joined the 392nd in April 1943 when we were at Davis-Monthan Field. He completed 28 missions, including such tough ones as the North Sea Diversion; Kjeller, Norway; Gotha; Berlin; and Politz.

He remained in the Reserves until the 50's, when he resigned to complete graduate school.

In civilian life, he was with Shell Oil Company for four decades, in New York and Houston.

His wife is Bunny, and they live at 10819 Elmdale Drive, Houston, TX 77070. They have two children and six grandchildren.

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PROFILE

1/Lt George C. Schutze was the bombardier on the Linzmeier crew, joining the Group at Wendling Nov 13, 1944. He served in the 576/79 squadrons. The Linzmeier crew was a lead crew.

After the war, he was an administrative officer with a wholesale hardware/automotive distributor, retiring in 1986. He now does hospital volunteer work.

He is married to Frances, and their residence is at 2711 Greenlee Dr., Austin, TX 78703. They had four children, and have 10 grandchildren.

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PROFILE

Sgt Edward C. Shapley was an aircraft mechanic and instrument specialist in the 577th. He was an early member of the 392nd, joining us at Biggs Field in March or April of 1943.

Post-war, he was a machinist, first as automotive and then for 30 years with International Business Machines.

He married Nellie on the pre-embarkation furlough in May 1943. They live at RR1, Box 439, Saddlemire Road, Binghamton, NY 13903. They have three daughters and 7 grandchildren.

* * * *

DUES NOTICE - - - DUES NOTICE
CHECK THE MAILING LABEL, SEE IF YOU'VE PAID

"HIGH FLIGHT", MOVING POEM PENNED BY RCAF FIGHTER PILOT, IS REVERED BY WWII VETERANS

"High Flight"

by

John Gillespie Magee Jr.

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds -- and done a hundred things

You have not dreamed of -- wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew.
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high, untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

Most WWII veterans, particularly air, know the story of "High Flight". In 1941 Flight Officer John Gillespie Magee, Jr., a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force, was assigned to 412 Fighter *Squadron* in England and soon found himself in a Spitfire battling the Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain.

In late October, Magee took his plane up to 30,000 feet, leaving the fog and rain over Britain behind him and finding the bright sun and blue skies only a pilot could see. When he landed, Magee was inspired to put pen to paper to try to capture the experience he wanted to share with his parents. Little did he know his poem would be shared with millions of people and certainly for generations to come.

John Magee never lived to see how his words would touch the hearts of fellow pilots, heads of state, and people the world over. He died at the age of nineteen in a mid-air collision a few weeks after writing "High Flight"

"High Flight" has traveled to the moon aboard Apollo 15 and in 1986 President Ronald Reagan quoted the poem in his moving tribute to the astronauts of the Space Shuttle Challenger. Today, "High Flight" is displayed at the Air Force Museum in Dayton.

David Magee, John's younger brother, plans to present an illuminated copy to the American Air Museum at Duxford, England.

* * * *

PARDON US IF WE SEEM TOO INSISTENT, BUT WE'D LIKE VERY MUCH FOR MEMBERS TO SEND IN THEIR DUES NOW. IF WE HAVE TO HOUND YOU FOR THEM, IT MAKES EXTRA WORK FOR THE NEWS STAFF AND THE TREASURER. YOU'LL BE DOING US A BIG FAVOR IF YOU SEND YOUR $12 TO GIL BAMBAUER NOW.

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GET YOUR 1995 DUES OBLIGATION OUT OF THE WAY NOW. DUES SENT IN NOW WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOUR OFFICERS AND EDITORS, AND WILL INSURE YOUR RECEIVING YOUR NEWSLETTER WITHOUT DELAY. You can tell where you stand with your dues by the code right after your name on the label. If is LM (for Life Membership) or 95 or higher, you're paid up. If there is an error, contact Gil Bambauer.

The Board of Directors has ruled that no Crusader will be denied membership because of financial difficulty, so if you are in straightened circumstances check the Hardship Waiver Box. Fill out the form below and send it in now!

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Age 66-70 $96 [_____]
Age 71 and over $78 [_____]

Send with check to Gil Bambauer, 974 Fairway Dr., Dewey, AZ 86327

PROFILE

S/Sgt James H. Hair was a gunner on the Brunn crew in the 579th, joining the Group at Wendling in March 1944.

Before joining the 392nd, he flew 13 missions with the 376th BG in the 15th AF.

He remained in the Air Force, retiring as M/Sgt in 1966.

After retirement, he was in the Civil Service and resided at Glen Burnie, MD.

In 1990 he relocated to his present home where, he says, "people still go into the yard to watch the airplanes fly over."

He and wife Bernice live at 715 Pineview Dr., Thomson, GA 39824.

* * * *

PROFILE

1/Lt Ed Popek was a first pilot in the 577th, completing his tour on Mar. 11, 1945, on a mission to Keil.

He took the B.A. degree in History and Government and the M. A. in Education at Kansas City University. He then taught over 32 years in the Kansas City schools, retiring in 1984.

He is married to Erma, and they live at 4208 E. 69th St., Kansas City, MO 64132. They have twin daughters.

* * * *

PROFILE

T/Sgt Emeul E. Vassey, Jr. was the flight engineer on the Slafka/Strobel crew in the 578th. He arrived at Wendling in January 1944.

He re-entered the Air Force in 1949, and served in SAC and MAC. He retired in 1973 as SMSGT.

He lives at HCR 60, Box 165, South Gouldsboro, ME 04678. He is married to Elinor, and they have four children and 13 grandchildren.

* * * *

AIR ANNIVERSARY

US Strategic Air Forces in Europe activated-1944.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

General H. H. Arnold directed establishment of new Air Force later designated 8th Air Force-1942.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Allied Air Forces in Africa activated under Maj Gen Carl Spaatz-1943.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Maj Gen James Doolittle assumed command of 8th Air Force-1944.

DUES NOTICE - - - DUES NOTICE
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Dayton Airport Inn
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EVENT: 8AF CONTROL TOWER DEDICATION
APRIL 22, 1995

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Arrive_____ Leave_____

Guaranteed by check or_____
(Credit card)

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Address_____

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Bus trans required for____persons

Brkfst buffet for____persons

Dinner buffet for____persons

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Room w/ twin beds
_____for two

THE CUTOFF DATE FOR REGISTRATION IS APR 1

(The Airport Inn is just north of I-70 at exit 32, and west of I-75.)

FOLDED WINGS REPORT (PLEASE REPORT ANY DEATH OF SPOUSE AS WELL AS OF MEMBER)

Name of deceased _____ Sqdn. _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Date of death _____ Survivors:(Send copy of obit from newspaper if possible) _____

Reported by _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

[ ] Record a memorial contribution to 392nd BGMA in my name, check made out to 392nd Bomb Group Memorial Ass'n., enclosed. Send this report to Jim Goar, 5 N. Columbia St., Frankfort, IN 46041.

NEWS

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Almighty God, Who has blessed us with the will and courage to do our duty, we praise You for our comrades whose death kept freedom living. We praise You also for giving us the years we have lived since their departure. We pray that You will strengthen and sustain our devotion to truth and justice, so that we may be faithful beneficiaries of their sacrifice. Continue Your mercy to our comrades; keep them in Your care; and bring us all at last into Your presence there to rejoice eternally. Amen.
-Prayer composed by 576th pilot the Very Reverend Robert C. Martin, retired Dean of the Cathedral at Erie, Pa.

PROFILE

1/Lt Jay W. Thornburgh was Sqdn. Navigator of the 579th, joining the Group at Wendling in May 1944. He was on the Bob Caldwell crew, and flew 20 missions as lead navigator.

After the war, he graduated from the University of Toledo with an engineering degree and worked for 33 years for the Dana Corporation. Part of that time was in Paris. He visited Wendling in 1978, before the Memorial was renovated.

In the summer of 1994, he and co-pilot Dick Harer and pilotage navigator John Walters got together at Jay's home in Michigan for a reunion.

He and wife Phyllis divide their time between a summer residence at 8180 E. Ferndale, Manitou Beach, MI., and a winter address at 4019 Eaglehurst, Sylvania, OH 43560. They have three children and five grandchildren.

* * * *

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But we..shall be remembered:

**We few,
we happy few,
we band of
brothers;**

**For he to-day
that sheds his
blood with me**

**Shall be
my brother...**

William Shakespeare
Henry V

FOLDED WINGS

Thomas E. Keeney, 578/9
James D. McFarland, 576, Sept. 23, 1994
Joseph Casalone, 578, Apr. 29, 1994

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Strength of Signal Corps Aviation Section consisted of 49 personnel and 25 aircraft-1916.

AIR ANNIVERSARY

Wright Brothers open negotiations with Government for procurement of 1 airplane-1905.

AIR ANNIVSERSARY

General of the Air Force H. H. Arnold died of heart ailment-1950.